

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: RFE ACCREDITATION TO OLYMPIC GAMES

1. THE FOLLOWING LETTER FROM DAVID ABSHIRE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING, WAS SENT TO LORD KILLANIN PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE.

2. QUOTE. AS CHAIRMAN OF THE US BIB, I PROTEST MOST ENERGETICALLY THE WITHDRAWAL OF OLYMPIC PRESS ACCREDITATION FROM THE RFE NEWS TEAM AND URGE YOU TO TAKE SPEEDY
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ACTION TO RESTORE THESE CREDENTIALS.

OUR BOARD, PPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND CONFIRMED BY THE UNITED STATES SENATE, WAS CREATED IN 1973 BY LAW TO GRANT FEDERAL FUNDS TO RADIO FREE EUROPE AND OVERSEE ITS BROADCAST ACTIVITIES, AFTER A FINDING BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES THAT RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY FURTHER THE OPEN COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION AND IDEAS, THEREBY CONTRIBUTING TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND STABILITY. OUR BOARD CONTINUOUSLY, IN THE CONGRESS AND IN ANNUAL AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATIONS HEARINGS, 'AS REVIEWED THE ACTIVITIES OF RADIO FREE EUROPE AND FOUND A PROFESSIONAL NEWS AND INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE HIGHEST

INTEGRITY. LESS THAN A YEAR AGO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES AFTER EXTENSIVE HEARINGS PASSED THE AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION FOR OUR BOARD AND THE RADIO WITHOUT A SINGLE RECORDED DISSENT. THE APPROPRIATION CONSTITUTED A 30 PERCENT INCREASE REFLECTING BROAD COALITION OF LIBERALS AND CONSERVATIVES IN BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS THAT THE NEWS, INFORMATION AND IDEAS BROADCAST BY RFE AND RL CONTRIBUTED EFFECTIVELY TO DETENTE AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG PEOPLES.

RFE SPORTS REPORTERS HAVE BEEN COVERING OLYMPIC GAMES SINCE 1952, AND THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DECISIVELY REJECTED SOVIET CHALLENGES TO RFE CREDENTIALS AT MEXICO CITY IN 1968 AND MUNICH IN 1972. RFE'S BROADCAST OF THOSE OLYMPICS WERE THOROUGHLY PROFESSIONAL AND NON-POLITICAL, AS WERE THE BROADCASTS OF THE WORLD FOOTBALL CUP IN MUNICH IN 1974 AND NUMEROUS OTHER INTERNATIONAL SPORTS EVENTS TO WHICH RFE HAS BEEN ACCREDITED.

IN OUR VIEW, THE CHALLENGE BY THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER WARSAW PACT REPRESENTATIVES TO RFE CREDENTIALS AT INNSBRUCK IS IN DIRECT VIOLATION OF THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE WHICH PLEDGES THE SIGNATORIES TO "FAVOR COOPERATION AMONG PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL RADIO AND TV ORGANIZATIONS." AND IN WHICH THE SIGNATORIES "NOTE THE UNCLASSIFIED

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EXPANSION IN THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION BROADCAST BY RADIO, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THIS PROFESSION."

AS YOU KNOW, THE AUSTRIAN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE HAS REPEATEDLY STATED ITS VIEW THAT RFE REPORTERS WERE DULY ACCREDITED, AS SPECIFIED IN THE IOC BY-LAWS, AND THE US DELEGATION HAS EXPRESSED ITS WILLINGNESS TO ENDORSE

RFE-ACCREDITATION UNDER ITS INTERNATIONAL QUOTA. IN VIEW
OF THESE FACTS, WE STRONGLY URGE YOU AND YOUR FELLOW
MEMBERS OF THE IOC TO RESTORE RFE CREDENTIALS TO THE
INNSBRUCK OLYMPICS AND TO INSURE THAT NO SIMILAR
CONTROVERSY, FOMENTED BY A SMALL GROUP OF STATES FOR
POLITICAL REASONS, IS PERMITTED TO MAR THE SUMMER OLYMPICS
AT MONTREAL AND HINDER THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION.
WITH DEEPEST RESPECTS, DAVID M. ABSHIRE, CHAIRMAN, BIB
UNQUOTE.
INGERSOLL

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